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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women (CEDAW)

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES
UNDER ARTICLE 18 OF THE CONVENTION

Second periodic reports of States parties

Addendum

MEXICO

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INTRODUCTION

The Government of Mexico, as a State party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, hereby submits, in accordance with article 18 of the Convention, its report for the period 1983-1986, with the understanding that it includes information corresponding to 1987.

This report takes due account of the comments and views expressed by the experts of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its second session with reference to the initial report of Mexico (CEDAW/C/5/Add.2).

In the light of the "General guidelines regarding the form and contents of reports", 1/ in the document we are submitting now part I refers only to those aspects not covered in the initial report, while part II provides specific information in relation to each provision of the Convention.

1/ Document CEDAW/C/7.

PART I

1. General aspects 2/

In its initial report, the Government of Mexico gave a detailed description of the constitutional provisions and the relevant norms of Mexican legislation that guarantee equality of rights and preclude discrimination against women in all areas of national life.

Article 4 of the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States establishes that "men and women are equal before the law". The principle of legal equality is also constitutionally established with regard to nationality (article 30), civil and political capacity (articles 34 and 35) and labour (article 123).

The principle of equality of men and women is fully established in the country's secondary legislation, essentially the General Law on Population, the Law on Nationality and Naturalization, the Federal Labour Law, the Federal Law Governing Workers in the Service of the State, the Commercial Code, the Civil Code for the Federal District with regard to Ordinary Matters and for the whole Republic with regard to Federal Matters, and the Code of Civil Procedure for the Federal District.

Moreover, with reference to paragraph 3(e) of the "General guidelines", article 133 of the Political Constitution lays down that international agreements signed by the President of the Republic with the approval of the Senate shall be, together with the Mexican Constitution and laws promulgated by the Federal Congress, the supreme law of the whole Union, so that through incorporation in national legislation the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women is directly applicable in Mexico.

It must be stressed that, in conformity with this article of the Constitution, the judges of each state of the Republic are bound by the provisions of the Convention to which this report relates, even in the event of conflict with contrary provisions which may exist in local laws or constitutions.

Consequently, Mexican legislation possesses the necessary provisions to eliminate and prevent practices resulting in any manner from discrimination based on sex and infringing the human rights of women in Mexico.

Mexican society has undergone profound changes in this century. The work done by the régime that emerged from the Revolution initiated in 1910 has affected the broadest sectors of the population: in 1930 the life expectancy of the average Mexican was 37 years, whereas it is currently 66 years; illiteracy has been reduced from 50 per cent to 9 per cent in the same period; social security coverage has reached nearly half the total population, and primary health services are now available to almost the entire population.

Similarly, the Mexican economy has been transformed through fundamental policies of which noteworthy elements have been agrarian reform, industrial development and the expansion of the infrastructure, communications and urban services.

This is the framework for the policies of the Mexican State in favour of the authentic protection of the rights of women in Mexico. Various constitutional reforms between 1934 and 1974 ensure full legal equality between men and women.

2/ Document CEDAW/C/7, paragraph 3(a), (b) and (e).

Alongside this, greater attention has been paid to advancing the social status of women in development programmes, in order to increase participation by women in all activities of national life and, in particular, to permit their access to education and health services, thereby generating the necessary conditions for their incorporation in the structured sector of the economy, formal employment and social security.

Since the proclamation by the United Nations of the International Women's Year in 1975, Mexican efforts in this area have been linked with the measures adopted by the international community at the world conferences held at Mexico City, Copennagen and Nairobi, reflecting a clear awareness of the interaction between the problems affecting women, development problems and the problems of society as a whole, and the intention to bring about a permanent change in the traditional concept of the roles of men and women in society and in the family since the underestimation of the value of women's activities in all fields diminishes the collective effort.

2. National programme to promote and ensure the full development and advancement of women 3/

The policies being implemented by the Government of Mexico to enhance the condition of women, based on national experience and enriched by the significant contribution of the United Nations Decade for Women, have in recent years been embodied in the National Programme of Action for the Integration of Women in Development. This Programme, of which a copy is attached for use by the members of the Committee (annex I), proposes lines of action for different areas of community life and promotes the direct and active participation of Mexican women therein.

3/ Document CEDAW/C/7, section 3(d).

PART II 4/

1. Institutional measures

The objectives and priorities of the National Population Council, the agency of the Federal Government responsible for promoting the integration of women in the economic and social activity of the country, include the improvement of the living conditions of women in Mexico. With this in mind, the Council conducted a national survey in the first half of 1983 to update information on the situation of women and to examine progress made in programmes carried out in this field up to 1983, as well as to obtain proposals for policies to be implemented by the Government of the Republic. The population survey led to a draft Programme of Action whose outlines were approved in August 1983.

The Programme of Action proposes lines of policy and is also the basis for the specific programmes of the various agencies of the Government of the Republic, at municipal, state and federal level. The objectives of the National Programme of Action for the Integration of Women in Development are included in the 1983-1988 National Development Plan, which, through the application of programmes for broad social participation, has tackled the most severe economic crisis suffered by the country in its modern history.

To promote the implementation of the National Programme of Action, the National Commission for Women was set up as the mechanism to co-ordinate and evaluate the relevant sectoral programmes and activities.

The National Commission for Women is made up of representatives of the three branches of government of the Union, the governments of the states of the Republic, and the various social organizations and centres of higher education. Each of the women representatives is also the co-ordinator of the commission for women within the organization, institution, State Secretariat or department of the Federal Government that she represents.

There are also commissions for women in the Senate and Chamber of Deputies, as well as in the organs of the judiciary of the Federation.

Likewise, commissions have been set up in the states of the Republic, in numerous municipalities and in the social organizations of the states.

The National Commission for Women, as the government agency responsible for co-ordinating the National Programme of Action, formulated an Operational Programme for the three-year period 1986-1988, the aim of its work and initiatives being to enhance the participation of Mexican women in political, economic and cultural activities.

The Operational Programme (annex II) was developed with due reference to the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women (during the Period from 1986 to the Year 2000) and sets out specific measures to implement the aforesaid National Programme of Action, defining priorities for the government departments, in conjunction with social organizations and academic institutions.

4/ Document CEDAW/C/7, paragraph 4.

2. Statistical information

The Government of Mexico has pleasure in providing below the information requested by the Committee on the position of women in Mexico in various areas of social life.

A. Demographic aspects

Table 1

Total population
(thousands)

Year	Total	Males	Females
1940	19 653.5	9 695.7	9 957.7
1950	25 791.0	12 696.9	13 094.0
1960	34 923.1	17 415.3	17 507.8
1970	48 225.2	24 065.6	24 159.6
1980	69 346.9	34 580.0	34 766.9
1984	76 891.8	38 449.7	38 342.0

Table 2

Female population - rural and urban
(thousands)

Year	Female population rural a/	Female population urban
1960	8 338	9 030
1970	9 703	14 369
1980	11 714	23 034

a/ Living in communities of less than 2,500 people.

Table 3

Population density and growth rate, 1980

Growth rate	2.7%	per annum
Density	34.4	inhabitants/km^2

Table 4

Percentage distribution of the population by age group, 1980

Age group	Total	Males	Females
Total	100	100	100
0-4	16.1	16.5	15.8
5-9	15.3	15.6	15.0
10-14	13.4	13.6	13.2
15-19	11.1	11.0	11.3
20-24	8.9	8.6	9.1
25-29	6.9	6.8	7.0
30-34	5.6	5.5	5.7
35-39	4.9	4.7	4.9
40-44	4.1	4.1	4.2
45-49	3.4	3.3	3.4
50-54	2.7	2.7	2.8
55-59	2.2	2.2	2.1
60-64	1.6	1.6	1.6
65 and over	3.8	3.8	3.9

Table 5

Life expectancy for women

Year	Expectancy (years)
1940	42.50
1950	51.04
1960	60.32
1970	63.95
1980	67.00

The Government of Mexico carried out a National Demographic Survey in February and March 1982 with the main aim of measuring fertility levels and contraception.

The Survey used a stratified sample with two levels: households and women aged between 15 and 49 years residing in the home. The number of households visited was of the order of 20,000 and the women interviewed numbered 10,205.

The data collected are representative of almost 17 million Mexican women and are set out below for the information of the Committee, beginning with the data provided by the Survey regarding the general characteristics of the women interviewed.

Table 6

Percentage distribution of all women by age group and size of the locality of residence

Age	Total	Size of the locality of residence: Less than 20,000 people	More than 20,000 people a/	Metropolitan areas b/
15-19	100	49.8	23.3	26.9
20-24	100	43.2	26.0	30.8
25-29	100	43.0	26.4	30.6
30-34	100	48.6	23.3	28.0
35-39	100	51.3	24.2	24.5
40-44	100	50.0	24.0	26.0
45-49	100	51.5	22.9	25.5
Total	100	47.7	24.4	27.9

a/ Excluding the metropolitan areas of Mexico City, Guadalajara and Monterrey.

b/ Metropolitan areas of Mexico City, Guadalajara and Monterrey.

Table 7

Percentage breakdown of civil status of women aged between 15 and 49 years

Civil status	1982
Married	51.5
Free union	9.0
Widowed	2.7
Divorced or separated	4.2
Unmarried	32.5
Total	100.0

Table 8

Percentage distribution of all women by age group and schooling

Age	Total	Schooling: Did not attend school	Incomplete primary schooling	Complete primary schooling	Secondary schooling	College Preparatory or more	Technical education
15-19	100.0	3.3	22.4	19.7	29.7	14.3	10.5
20-24	100.0	4.8	24.8	21.1	16.4	15.4	17.5
25-29	100.0	8.8	30.2	22.8	12.5	10.4	15.2
30-34	100.0	11.7	39.7	19.9	8.0	7.7	12.4
35-39	100.0	19.0	41.7	18.0	6.3	5.1	10.0
40-44	100.0	26.6	40.2	15.9	3.9	3.4	10.0
45-49	100.0	30.5	43.9	12.1	3.4	3.0	7.1
Total	100.0	11.5	31.8	19.4	14.7	10.1	12.5

Table 9

Percentage distribution of all women by schooling, depending on size of the locality of residence

Size of the locality of residence	Total	Schooling					
		Did not attend school	Incomplete primary schooling	Complete primary schooling	Secondary schooling	College preparatory or more	Technical education
Less than 20,000 people	100	17.6	42.6	17.3	11.1	5.9	5.6
More than 20,000 people	100	7.1	25.0	21.6	18.1	11.2	17.0
Metropolitan areas	100	5.0	19.3	20.9	18.1	16.5	20.2

Table 10

Proportion of women who work by age group

Age	Proportion of women who work a/
15-19	0.16
20-24	0.29
25-29	0.23
30-34	0.22
35-39	0.22
40-44	0.18
45-49	0.21
Total	0.22

a/ In the sense that they have formal employment from which they obtain an income.

The proportion of women who work in localities of less than 20,000 people is 15 per cent, in localities of more than 20,000 people it is 25 per cent and in the metropolitan zones of Mexico City, Guadalajara and Monterrey it is 30 per cent.

Table 11

Average number of live-born children by age group, 1982

Age	Average number of live-born children
15-19	0.18
20-24	1.10
25-29	2.47
30-34	3.84
35-39	5.31
40-44	5.87
45-49	6.37
Total	2.76

The average number of live-born children of women who have not attended school is 5.63, and the number for women with incomplete (basic) primary education is 3.97.

In the case of women with complete (basic) primary education, the average number of live-born children is 2.30, compared with 1.10 for women with secondary education.

The average number of live-born children of women residing in communities of less than 20,000 people is 3.22, whereas the average for women residing in communities of more than 20,000 inhabitants is 2.53, compared with 2.18 in the metropolitan areas of Mexico City, Guadalajara and Monterrey.

The average number of live-born children of women who work is 1.74, whereas the average for women who do not work (in the sense that they do not have a formal job from which they obtain an income) is 3.04.

Table 12

Proportion of women who have used contraceptive methods and proportion of users of efficient contraceptive methods by age group

Age	Proportion of women: Who have used contraceptive methods	Using efficient contraceptive methods a/
15-19	0.07	0.03
20-24	0.36	0.24
25-29	0.59	0.40
30-34	0.63	0.46
35-39	0.61	0.41
40-44	0.43	0.29
45-49	0.27	0.14
Total	0.39	0.26

a/ Women who state that they themselves or their husbands have been sterilized or who have been using contraceptive pills, injections, condoms or intra-uterine devices.

Table 13

Proportion of women users of efficient contraceptive methods out of all married women and women living in free unions, by level of schooling

	Women users of efficient contraceptive methods
Total	0.40
Schooling	Years of schooling
Did not attend school	0
Incomplete primary schooling	Between 1 and 5
Complete primary schooling	6
Secondary schooling	Between 7 and 9
Technical education	Between 10 and 12
Baccalaureate or vocational training	12 or more
	0.22
	0.38
	0.45
	0.47
	0.56
	0.53

Table 14

Proportion of women users of efficient contraceptive measures out of all married women and women living in free unions, by size of the locality of residence

	Women users of efficient contraceptive methods
Total	0.40
Size of the locality of residence	
Less than 20,000 people	0.32
More than 20,000 people	0.48
Metropolitan areas of Mexico City, Guadalajara and Monterrey	0.52

Table 15

Proportion of women users of efficient contraceptive methods out of all married women and women living in free unions, by number of live-born children

	Women users of efficient contraceptive methods
Total	0.40
Number of live-born children:	
0	0.06
1 or 2	0.41
3	0.48
4 or 5	0.53
6 or more	0.36

Mexico's population policy is part of the general development strategy for the country and is based on a humanist approach which respects the freedom of the individual and the decisions of the family. The Government of Mexico is conscious that demographic policy should take social needs into account and that the target should be to enhance the overall welfare of the family and the community.

The results of the National Demographic Survey indicate the prevailing patterns in Mexico in recent years: as the level of schooling of Mexican women has risen, there has been an increase in their opportunities for finding jobs and, in addition, for a considerable number of women, incorporation in urban life - factors which have caused the average number of live-born children to decrease.

In the past, a mere 40 or 50 years ago, the extended family had its own social and economic rationale, but also reflected the scarcity of information on sex education and family planning, the strength of tradition and the limited nature of health and social security services.

The nuclear family predominates today and sex education forms part of general education. There have been large-scale information campaigns on family planning and there are health and social security services for the majority of the population.

3. Updated information on the application of the articles of the Convention 5/

Article 5

In order to promote the full application of article 5 of the Convention and therefore to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, Mexico has developed and undertaken information and orientation campaigns using the mass media (radio and television) on:

(i) The importance of the role of the woman as mother;

(ii) The benefits for the woman of continuing her studies or expanding studies already undertaken;

(iii) The function of the family as the primary focus of society and the significance of each of its components: father, sons, daughters, grandparents, uncles and aunts, etc.;

(iv) The important social and economic contribution of the housewife, whether she belongs to the middle classes or to the lower-income groups, and the resultant need to recognize the joint responsibility of all family members for housework.

Article 7

The participation of women in the political life of the country on an equal basis with men is guaranteed by article 4 of the Political Constitution of the Republic, with the individual guarantee of equality of men and women before the law.

The enjoyment and exercise of political rights are enshrined in article 34 of the Constitution, which sets out that "men and women who, having the status of Mexicans, ..." have reached the age of 18 years are "citizens of the Republic".

5/ Document CEDAW/C/7, paragraph 4. With reference to articles 6, 9, 13, 15 and 16 of the Convention, the Government of Mexico wishes to reiterate the information given to the Committee in its initial report.

Article 35 of the Constitution defines the prerogatives of the citizen and lays down that Mexican citizens (men and women) are eligible to take part in the formation and functioning of public institutions, i.e. they have the political capacity to vote and be elected, to associate together with a view to constituting parties and considering political matters and to hold any public office.

Even though the initial report of the Government of Mexico, submitted in 1982, already included a broad explanation of the legal bases of the political equality of women, that is to say the legal framework for their participation in the nation's political life, it is important to point out that women's participation in politics is conditioned by their level of political awareness and by cultural stereotypes (which persist in most countries with a colonial past) which tend, in a generalized way, to identify the function of women more closely with activities of a private and family nature than with activities of a public and collective nature.

The participation of the political parties is thus a matter of prime importance, since their capacity for social mobilization and dissemination of ideologies and programmatic proposals has enabled them to make a favourable contribution to promoting political activity by women.

Women in political parties

In Mexico the dynamics of the political parties themselves in recent years has led to the incorporation of a greater number of women at various levels of party leadership. A woman candidate was even put forward for election to the office of President of the Republic for the period 1982-1988.

In organizational terms, however, several political parties limit the participation of women to commissions or secretariats concerned with female advancement or women's organizations, which is considered by some currents of feminist opinion as restricting the intervention of women in decisions affecting the party as a whole.

In 1983 and 1984, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) made important changes to its basic documents as far as women are concerned. It established the National Council for the Participation of Women, through which PRI would "fight for the enforcement of the principle of equality between men and women before the law and the acceleration of the full incorporation of the female population in party tasks and efforts aimed at national development". In this spirit, the party elected a woman as General Secretary of its National Executive Committee, an office which she held until early 1987.

The Council for the Integration of Women of PRI organizes women's meetings in the farming, worker and popular sectors which have provided the opportunity for the formulation of demands, aspirations, claims and criticisms, these constituting the primary source for the elaboration of proposals by women to the leadership of the Party for inclusion in the basic electoral platform.

National development, accelerated urbanization, economic modernization and far-reaching changes in the cultural and educational life of Mexico have been progressively creating the objective conditions and the requirements for increasing participation by women in political activities. Nevertheless, this participation has been gaining ground only gradually and is still hindered by certain traditional conceptions which, however, are being combated by the party and social organizations.

Faced with these obstacles, which merely limit the potential of Mexican society to make further progress in building a stronger and more productive and therefore more democratic, independent and sovereign nation, the political parties

in general have attempted to give greater impetus to the participation of women in order to achieve the full daily exercise of their equal rights as enshrined in the Political Constitution in force in Mexico.

The updated Electoral Roll includes a total of 35,602,138 citizens (18,023,783 women and 17,578,355 men). This means that the total number of citizens eligible to vote in the next federal elections is made up of 51 per cent women and 49 per cent men.

In the elections to form the present legislature of the Chamber of Deputies of the Congress of the Union in July 1985, there were 248 women candidates to serve as federal deputies for the nine political parties which put forward candidates, with the following breakdown by party:

Party	Number of women
Workers' Revolutionary Party (PRT)	53
Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI)	31
Authentic Party of the Mexican Revolution (PARM)	27
Socialist People's Party (PPS)	26
Workers' Socialist Party (PST)	25
Mexican Democratic Party (PDM)	24
Mexican Workers' Party (PMT)	23
National Action Party (PAN)	21
Unified Socialist Party of Mexico (PSUM)	18
Total	248

As far as participation by women in the three branches of government of the Union is concerned, the following should be noted:

Federal executive

There are 91 women in leadership positions, including two Under-Secretaries and one Senior Official, while the remainder are Directors-General, Unit Chiefs in the Federal Government and Political Delegates in the Department of the Federal District. This does not include the women working in the Mexican Foreign Service because, although they also constitute higher-level officials of the Executive, reference will be made to them in the information relating to article 8 of the Convention.

Legislative branch

In the Congress of the Union there is a total of 36 women federal deputies and six women senators.

Judiciary

The Supreme Court of Justice of the nation is made up of 21 judges, four of them being women. In the courts and tribunals, there are 367 judicial personnel, of whom 129 are women, including the President of the Higher Court of Justice (Tribunal Superior de Justicia).

Table 16

Judicial personnel, by sex

	Total	Men	%	Women	%
Judges of higher courts (magistrados)	39	25	64	14	36
Judges of lower courts (jueces)	222	141	64	81	36
• Of civil courts	47	26	55	21	45
• Of family courts	40	29	73	11	27
• For rents and leases	30	21	70	9	30
• Of criminal courts	66	40	61	26	39
• For bankruptcy cases	3	2	67	1	33
• Of both civil and criminal courts of first instance	1	1	100	-	-
• Justices of the Peace	35	22	63	13	37
Court secretaries (secretarios de acuerdos)	106	72	68	34	32
Higher courts (salas)	12	8	67	4	33
Lower courts (juzgados) a/	94	64	68	30	32
• Civil	28	20	71	8	29
• Criminal	31	22	71	9	29
• For rents and leases	13	10	77	23	23
• Family	22	12	55	10	45
TOTAL	367	238	65	129	35

a/ As at 1 August 1987.

In the governments of the states of the Republic and the municipalities throughout the country, there is significant participation by women. An example of this is the fact that, in 1980, a woman Governor was elected in the State of Colima and, in 1986, another woman was elected as Governor of the State of Tlaxcala. There are also women at the level of secretary-general or secretary (in state governments) responsible for tourism, finance, etc. In 1987 the State of Guerrero established a Secretariat for the Promotion of Women.

The social demands of women who are active in politics are varied. The reasons for the diversity lie in their class background, the characteristics of the workplace, the development of their communities, their particular regional and cultural features and the absence or otherwise of public services.

For instance, indigenous women seek support to overcome poverty and also ask for full respect for their culture and distinctive character. Peasant women want acknowledgement of their right to the land and the continued provision of credit and training to promote production units. Women manual workers and working women in

general call for compliance with the constitutional precept "equal pay for equal work" and are constantly urging the provision of services to enable them to discharge their responsibilities as workers and as mothers. Women from middle-income groups, including housewives, seek public services, decent housing and jobs. They also want to play an increasing part in public affairs and continue to fight against conceptions which impair their dignity and value as human beings.

While reiterating their fundamental role as the focus of the Mexican family and in the transmission of life, culture and essential values, they all call for a continuation of the struggle against inflation which is having such an impact on the family budget, and for sustained development in the field of justice, the strengthening of democracy and the elimination of all vestiges of discrimination.

Article 8

Participation of women in international relations

The legal basis for equality in the participation of men and women in the conduct of international relations was fully explained in the initial report of Mexico.

Mexican women are free to enter the Mexican Foreign Service and are legally entitled to be considered for promotion or advancement under equal conditions with men.

To supplement the information already provided in response to the comments made by the Committee when analysing our initial report, it is important to point out that the participation of women in the Mexican Foreign Service has been influenced over the years by various socio-cultural patterns which have defined the position of women in society and delineated their traditional areas of occupational activity.

In this order of ideas, one of the fundamental causes for the continuing inequality in the participation of women in the Foreign Service is the division of labour between the sexes.

Despite the fact that recent decades have seen a considerable increase in the number of women in the economically active population and involved in the area of international relations, their opportunities are still limited to specific areas and their presence is concentrated generally in occupations and posts that are considered to be of secondary importance or lie in the sectors of lower remuneration.

Entry into the Foreign Service has not been restricted to those who have specialized in the study of international relations, but has been and is open to other very varied disciplines, particularly with regard to social sciences, for which reason one would have expected a larger number of women entering the Service than a couple of decades ago.

In order to illustrate the participation of women in the Mexican Foreign Service and their gradual numerical increase, here are a few figures from the Public Entry Examinations in recent years:

(a) Between 1971 and 1975 there were six Public Entry Examinations, in which there were 566 candidates (384 men and 182 women), of whom only 21 women and 76 men passed;

(b) The progress achieved by women in the field of international relations can be observed from table 17, which gives the total figures for members of the Mexican Foreign Service in the two main overall categories, i.e. "officials" and "chancellors".

Table 17

Members of the Mexican Foreign Service

	Diplomatic Branch					Consular Branch			
		Men		Women		Men		Women	
Year	Total	Officials	Chancellors	Officials	Chancellors	Officials	Chancellors	Officials	Chancellors
1953	478	123	24	4	31	113	116	8	59
1975	844	120	118	37	140	233	53	54	89
Percentage change 1953-1975	76.57%	-2.44%	391.67%	825.00%	351.61%	106.19%	-54.31%	575.00%	50.85%

Between 1971 and 1975 an average of four women entered the Foreign Service each year.

In 1975 there were 320 women in the Mexican Foreign Service out of a total of 844 persons. There were 91 women in the various ranks of "officials", and 229 women out of a total of 400 chancellors.

These figures reflect the gradual incorporation of women in this career sector. Thus, in 1975 they accounted for 35 per cent of the Mexican Foreign Service. Nevertheless, it is evident that most women occupy operational support functions.

The corresponding figures for the Public Entry Examination held in February 1987 indicate greater interest on the part of women with a general or university background in entering the Foreign Service: 335 men and 207 women took part in the Examination. However, at the end of the first stage of the Examination, the 30 candidates who achieved the necessary qualifying level consisted of 24 men and only 6 women.

This shows that, even though women are increasingly interested in joining the Foreign Service, even accounting for virtually half of the candidates, their true level of participation is reduced after the Examinations and they constitute only a quarter of those who pass the first stage.

Current participation

In 1987 the Mexican Foreign Service was made up of 1,215 persons, including 503 women (41.40 per cent). Of these 503 women, 102 belonged to the Diplomatic (75) and Consular (27) Branches. In the Administrative Branch there were 21 Administrative Attachés and 380 Chancellors.

The distribution of members of the Foreign Service, broken down by grade and sex, in February 1987 is given in the following table.

It is worth stressing that, in 1987, the proportion of women increased considerably at the different levels, fluctuating between 6.9 per cent and 40 per cent in the Diplomatic Branch and between 16 per cent and 29 per cent in the Consular Branch, although the latter does not have any women in the two top grades (Consul-General and Consul-Counsellor). These figures highlight the greater participation of women in comparison with the situation which existed up to 1970, even though the percentage of women in the Foreign Service is still small, constituting a mere 17 per cent in the Diplomatic Branch and 18 per cent in the Consular Branch.

The available statistics indicate that, in the Administrative Branch, women occupy the majority of posts that can be classified as "support" posts. Women account for 61 per cent of the staff of the Administrative Branch, although in the Chancellor categories, which include occupations defined as "traditionally female", the percentage rises to 64 per cent.

Table 18

Comparative table of members of the Mexican Foreign Service in its three branches (1987)

Diplomatic branch

Ambassador		Minister		Counsellor		First Secretary		Second Secretary		Third Secretary		Diplomatic Attaché		Total	
Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
94	7	48	17	58	15	45	7	50	15	43	8	9	6	347	75

Consular branch

Consul-General		Consul-Counsellor		Consul, First grade		Consul, Second grade		Consul, Third grade		Consul, Fourth grade		Vice-Consul		Total	
Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
24	0	4	0	14	5	26	5	16	5	13	3	22	9	119	27

Administrative branch

Admin. Attaché, First grade		Admin. Attaché, Second grade		Admin. Attaché, Third grade		Chancellor, First grade		Chancellor, Second grade		Chancellor, Third grade		Total	
Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
8	6	15	7	15	8	80	155	61	132	67	93	246	401

Total men 712
Total women 503

Total percentage of men 58.6%
Total percentage of women 41.39%

Article 10

Education

Article 3 of the Constitution establishes, as a general principle, that the education imparted by the State shall be democratic and national and shall help to sustain the ideals of fraternity and equality of rights of all human beings, avoiding privileges of race, creed, group, sex or persons.

The school system in Mexico is made up of: the elementary level, for children aged between 4 and 14 years, comprising pre-school education and primary (basic) education; the middle level (secondary education), for young people aged between 13 and 19 years, the upper middle level or baccalaureate (bachillerato); teacher training; vocational technical education; and the higher or university level.

The education provided by the State is free of charge and primary education is compulsory.

There are also the following special programmes:

Programme of community courses, with the objective of imparting primary education to children in the rural (and indigenous) communities in the more remote areas of the country. This programme currently covers 15,000 localities.

Remote secondary teaching system (Telesecundaria), meeting the need for middle-level education in localities where there is no educational establishment.

The adult education programme offers basic education for this sector of the population under the aegis of a National Institute.

Table 19

Participation by women in the national educational system

Schooling	Period	Female enrolment	Percentage	Total enrolment
Pre-school education	1975-1976	270 693	50%	541 386
	1984-1985	1 095 000	51%	2 147 000
Primary education	1975-1976	5 535 863	48%	11 533 047
	1984-1985	7 305 000	48%	15 219 000
Secondary education	1975-1976	833 245	43%	1 937 779
	1984-1985	1 905 000	48%	3 968 000
Technical education	1975-1976	81 061	63%	50 953
	1984-1985	152 071	48%	316 616
Baccalaureate	1975-1976	179 384	29%	618 566
	1984-1985	722 000	38%	1 900 000
Basic teacher training	1976-1977	90 273	69%	130 981
	1984-1985	115 765	73%	159 140
Higher-level teacher training	1976-1977	20 793	49%	42 762
	1984-1985	71 395	51%	140 093
Higher education (licenciatura)	1975-1976	117 616	24%	490 067
	1984-1985	418 000	38%	1 100 000

The Government of Mexico, conscious of its responsibility fully to respect the right to education, gives a profound human and social content to its education policy and the resources used are intended to satisfy permanent social needs.

Table 20

Students enrolled for basic adult education by occupational group and sex, 1982

(In thousands)

Level and sex	Farm labourer	Domestic help	Salaried employee or worker	Self-employed	Unemployed, including housewives	Total	Percentage
Total	280	43	287	50	378	1 038	100.0
Men	251	7	207	32	32	523	50.3
Women	29	36	86	18	346	515	49.7
Primary	254	33	141	36	320	783	100.0
Men	230	5	103	23	23	383	48.8
Women	24	28	28	13	297	400	51.2
Secondary	26	10	146	13	59	254	100.0
Men	21	2	98	9	10	140	55.0
Women	5	8	48	4	49	114	45.0

In 1985, 48 per cent of the country's population was aged between four and 24 years and had access to education.

In the 10-year period between 1975 and 1985, participation by females in the educational system increased by 72.5 per cent - from 6.9 million female students in the academic year 1975/76 to 11.9 million in 1984/85.

It can thus be said that substantial progress has been made in eliminating the prejudices which gave preference in formal education to male children, but it must be acknowledged that the increased participation by women in the various levels of formal education still shows one weakness: the higher the level of education, the lower the proportion of women. This situation is also connected with socio-economic factors at family level.

The National Programme of Action for the Integration of Women in Development (annex I, pp. 36-41) envisages a number of measures which are being implemented by the Government:

- Promotion of the inclusion of women in programmes of formal education, primary and secondary as well as technical and vocational, to ensure that they are prepared under optimal conditions to enter the job market;

- Promotion, using formal and non-formal education systems, of information concerning sex education in order to ensure healthy, satisfactory and responsible sexuality;

- Revision and modification of the content of programmes and textbooks in order to reappraise the concept and social function of both women and men, on a basis of equality;

- Training of teaching personnel at the various levels of formal education so that they may be promoters par excellence of the model of equality between men and women;

- Development and application of teaching and apprenticeship methods which will promote the concept, function and egalitarian social participation of the sexes;

- Development of measures to enable women to enter, remain in and complete the different levels of formal education;

- Promotion of action, both inside and outside schools, to encourage women to select occupations and professions other than those traditionally considered to be a feminine preserve;

- Identification of the social and cultural obstacles which specifically hinder professional women in their careers in order to take steps to overcome them;

- Establishment by the relevant institutions of intensive adult education and literacy programmes, particularly aimed at rural and indigenous women, as well as those living in marginal urban zones;

- Promotion of vocational programmes that are realistic and flexible and achieve an adequate balance, both assisting the integration of women in development in the short term and satisfying the human resources needs arising from economic development, expanding training to include activities that have traditionally been regarded as non-female;

- Starting of training programmes for women connected with forms of social organization for work that will promote self-employment and the formation of co-operatives for trained women;

- Support, by means of non-formal education measures, for women's organizations in order to promote action to improve the standard of living of their communities;

- Promotion, in higher education institutions, of the conduct of research and the inclusion in the curriculum of seminars for the study of the situation of women; promotion of population education, aiming to analyse, and bring about knowledge of, the socio-economic and cultural causes of the situation of women, in order to provide them with the bases for re-evaluating themselves as human beings and pressing their claims in society;

- Development and dissemination of support material at the different levels of education to promote the integration of women in the economic, social, political and cultural development of the country.

Article 11

Employment

As an individual guarantee, article 5 of the Political Constitution of the Republic lays down that no one may be prevented from following the profession, occupation, trade or employment which he or she wishes, provided that it is lawful. Similarly, article 123 - concerning labour and social security - sets forth that every person has the right to dignified and socially useful work.

Article 3 of the Federal Labour Law lays down the general principles that work is a social right and duty, that it requires respect for the freedoms and dignity of the worker and that it must take place under conditions ensuring life, health and an appropriate economic level for the worker and his or her family. The same article provides that no distinction shall be made between workers on the basis of race, sex, age, religious beliefs, political beliefs or social status.

As part of the development process, the Government of Mexico has put into practice policies which have directly and indirectly contributed to significant growth in employment, transformed the structure of employment with reference to the activities in which the working classes are engaged, promoted the incorporation of women in the economically active population and substantially enhanced the educational and technical levels of workers.

In 1930, the economically active population amounted to 5,165,803 persons, of whom more than 3.5 million were involved in the farming and livestock sector. In 1950, the economically active population was 8,272,093 persons: 7,140,000 men and 1,130,000 women. In 1970, the economically active population was 12,955,057 persons: 10,480,000 men and 2,460,000 women. Of this population, 34.6 per cent was involved in the farming and livestock sector, 21.2 per cent in the industrial sector and 44.2 per cent in the service sector.

This means that, in 40 years (between 1930 and 1970), the economically active population increased significantly, and it is to be noted that, whereas in 1930 70 per cent were involved in farming and livestock activities, by 1970 this percentage had dropped to 34.6 per cent, with an increase in the population involved in industrial and service activities. Between 1950 and 1970, the proportion of women in the economically active population doubled.

The findings of the Tenth General Population Census in 1980 provide the following updated information on employment in Mexico:

Table 21

Economically active population, broken down by sex and area of activity, 1980

Branch of activity	Total	Men	Women
Agriculture, livestock, hunting, forestry and fishing	5 699 971	4 957 340	742 631
Mining and quarrying	447 017	322 464	154 553
Manufacturing	2 575 124	1 897 522	677 602
Electricity, gas and water	115 932	91 883	24 049
Construction	1 296 337	1 082 634	213 703
Trade, restaurants and hotels	1 729 296	1 137 568	591 728
Transport, storage and communication	672 111	594 910	77 201
Financing, insurance and real estate	405 754	308 998	96 756
Community, social and personal services	2 418 114	1 159 249	1 258 865
Inadequately defined	6 552 037	4 284 704	2 267 333
Unemployed who have not worked	124 391	87 534	36 857
Total	22 066 084	15 924 806	6 141 278

As can be seen, the trends described have continued, and in particular it may be noted that the proportion of women in the economically active population increased by 250 per cent between 1970 and 1980.

Nevertheless, in the past few years the employment situation in Mexico has been particularly difficult: diminished economic activity is coinciding with the massive incorporation of the generations born in the 1960s and increasing demand for participation by women, factors causing the labour force to swell by about 800,000 people each year.

In late 1982, the Mexican economy was in the middle of a crisis without precedent in the past 50 years. Price rises were running at nearly 100 per cent and the rate of open unemployment doubled during the year to 8 per cent.

The Immediate Economic Restructuring Programme, which the present administration implemented when it took up government, had three fundamental objectives: to fight inflation, to protect employment and to restore the capacity for economic growth.

The Government set out to avoid increases in unemployment by the direct creation of jobs in the zones and activities most affected by the crisis and by protecting existing production installations.

The Programme for the Protection of Production Plant and Employment, initiated in February 1983, set out to assist private, public and social industrial enterprises in solving three basic problems: reduced internal demand, problems of financing and liquidity, and scarcity of foreign exchange for the import of inputs, basic raw materials and the repayment of the external debt.

The 1983-1988 National Development Plan, presented by the Government of the Republic in May 1983, defined as a fundamental social policy proposal the increased generation of employment and the protection and gradual improvement of the purchasing power of wages. In this connection it established the following lines of policy:

(a) Use of public expenditure and fiscal, credit and foreign trade policies to restore the capacity for economic growth and to encourage production systems to switch to a supply of popular consumer goods in order to generate more jobs per production unit and a better distribution of income;

(b) Reorientation of public expenditure and tying of support and incentive policy to job creation as a priority objective;

(c) Strengthening of the capacity of small- and medium-scale units to generate more stable and better-paid jobs;

(d) Strengthening of the National Employment Service.

Towards the end of 1984 these policies had brought about a positive balance: inflation was cut to 60 per cent and there was more employment. Between June 1983 and June 1984, according to the National Urban Employment Survey carried out monthly by the National Institute for Statistics, Geography and Data Processing, the levels of open unemployment in the main towns had dropped during the period: from 7.2 to 6.3 per cent in Mexico City, from 7.0 to 5.5 per cent in Guadalajara, from 10.4 to 7.3 per cent in Monterrey, from 3.0 to 2.9 per cent in León, from 5.6 to 2.0 per cent in Puebla, from 5.4 to 4.7 per cent in San Luis Potosí and from 4.7 to 4.2 per cent in Veracruz. In Mérida the level had remained at 0.6 per cent and in Chihuahua, Tampico and Orizaba the level of unemployment had increased.

The levels of open unemployment continued to decline in 1985: down by 5.8 per cent in Mexico City, by 3 per cent in Guadalajara and by 5.3 per cent in Monterrey.

In 1984, within the framework of the Regional Employment Programmes, 380,000 jobs were created, preventing an increase in open unemployment.

Another aspect that has contributed to employment has been the continuity of the housing programmes, particularly those under the aegis of the Institute of the National Fund for Workers' Housing (INFONAVIT), the principal agency involved in executing the National Housing Development Programme and, from September 1985, the Emergency Housing Renovation Programme in the Federal District, implemented to deal with the disastrous consequences of the earthquakes which hit the capital of the Republic in that year.

During 1984 and 1985 the gross domestic product grew by 3.7 per cent and 3.9 per cent respectively in real terms. The number of permanent insurees of the Mexican Social Security Institute (IMSS) increased by 4.3 per cent in 1985, while the number of potential insurees increased by 26 per cent, figures which indicate growth in employment in that year in the structured sector of the economy.

On 15 October 1985, the President of the Republic set up the Employment Co-ordination Section of the National Commission for Reconstruction with the objective of restoring the jobs of those affected by the earthquakes. An estimated 10,000 jobs were directly lost as a result of the earthquakes in the Federal District, in both the formal and informal sectors of the economy. The indirect impact of the drop in demand, which affected about 10,000 more jobs, is being offset by the reconstruction work.

Against this background, it can be said that there has been increasing incorporation of women in economic activities. In 1975, the female economically active population (FEAP) was 22 per cent of the total economically active population, a proportion that had risen to 29 per cent by 1985. In absolute terms, in 1975 FEAP was 3.8 million women, rising to 7.9 million by 1985, indicating that, of every 100 women aged over 15 years, the number working or potentially working was 25 in 1975 and 37 in 1985.

The majority of women in paid employment are young (56 per cent), primarily in the 20-24 age group.

As regards the sectoral structure of FEAP, most women who work do so in the tertiary sector (services), a considerable percentage in the secondary sector (industry) and a smaller proportion in the primary sector (agriculture and livestock).

Nevertheless, one must not lose sight of the fact that, in the traditional peasant economy system, women contribute to the reproduction of the family labour force and agricultural production, since they not only look after the home, but also organize its economic productivity, taking responsibility for preparing food, taking it to the places of work (common land (ejidos) or smallholdings), and collaborating actively in the field alongside the family in preparing the soil, sowing, harvesting and marketing produce. The woman sometimes takes over the man's work when he has to migrate to seek other sources of income.

The concentration of women's work in the service branch covers widely differing situations: their work ranges from those activities which reproduce, outside the family circle, tasks considered traditionally as "woman's work" to highly specialized tasks requiring vocational preparation.

It can be stated that there is no discrimination against women in the sphere of employment, although it must be acknowledged that participation by women in the economically active population and their incorporation in all labour activities are still far from what the country requires, in terms of using all its potential.

Increasing numbers of women are taking on jobs to supplement the family income and there have been tangible changes in the attitude of society to women's work.

There can be no doubt that the forms and conditions under which women participate in the labour market vary, depending not only on the levels of development of the country and the activity concerned, but also on their own socio-cultural characteristics and their membership of different social groups.

The more complex urban and industrialized economies have required greater participation by women in the formal employment markets. Consequently, there is a significant proportion of women workers in paid activities.

Alongside this, there is also increased access by women to technical and vocational education. There is also a downward trend in fertility and, therefore, in family responsibilities, increasing women's chances of finding or remaining in employment.

Finally, the Government of Mexico wishes to remind the Committee that the Federal Labour Law lays down that labour conditions may in no case be worse than those fixed in the said Law, that they must be equal for equal work, and that there must be no distinction based on race, nationality, sex, age or religious or political beliefs.

Article 12

Health care and social security

Article 123 of the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States establishes the bases for the social security system in Mexico. Section XXIX of this article states that the Social Security Law is of public interest and shall cover insurance for disability, old age, life, involuntary cessation of work, sickness and accidents, the provision of nursery services and any other benefits directed towards the protection and well-being of workers, rural people, those with no paid employment and members of other social sectors and their families.

The social security system, which is entirely focused on the well-being of working people and their families, covers attention to the needs of health, culture and recreation, credit support and protection of the purchasing power of wages. It also guarantees protection for the worker and the worker's family in the event of accident, retirement, cessation of employment or death.

To protect the right to social security, a Social Security Law was promulgated in 1942 which was superseded by the new Social Security Law of 1973. This Law, which applies throughout the Republic, lays down that the purpose of social security is to guarantee the human right to health, medical assistance, protection of the means of subsistence and the social services necessary for individual and collective welfare. The entire population may avail itself of the benefits granted by the Law since it is a national public service.

A new Law on the Institute for Social Security and Services for State Employees (ISSSTE) was approved on 27 December 1983 to replace the law which had been in force for 24 years.

The new ISSSTE Law embodies important advances in social security by updating the rights of public employees. This Law: gives priority to preventive medicine; increases medical care services in their various aspects; gives special importance to rehabilitation; expands coverage for beneficiaries by establishing that care shall be provided for the children of participants up to 25 years of age when they are bona fide students and have no paid employment, as well as single mothers aged under 18 years, children aged over 18 years suffering from physical or mental disabilities who are not able to work, and children of the spouse even when they are not children of the participant if they depend economically on the participant; gives greater protection to the health of retired persons and their beneficiaries under similar conditions to active public employees; and also envisages the granting of short- and medium-term credits depending on length of service and basic salary.

Table 22

Persons entitled to the benefits of various social security institutions, 1984

Institution	Persons entitled to benefits
Mexican Social Security Institute (manual and non-manual workers and their families)	27,645,985
Institute for Social Security and Services for State Employees	5,467,876
Petróleos Mexicanos	784,083
Secretariat of National Defence	340,234
Secretariat for the Navy	162,400

In its initial report the Government of Mexico drew the attention of the Committee in a detailed manner to the provisions in force to guarantee the rights covered by articles 11 and 12 of the Convention.

With reference to the entitlement to social security and health protection, we give information below on changes in legislation and progress achieved in current programmes.

(a) Legislation

Article 4 of the Constitution, which states that "men and women are equal before the law", now contains the following paragraph in accordance with the decree published in the Official Gazette of the Federation on 18 March 1980:

"It is the parents' duty to protect the right of minors to the satisfaction of their needs and to physical and mental health. The Law shall determine the forms of support for the protection of minors by public institutions."

This is fully concordant with the provisions of article 11.2(c) of the Convention.

A further addition has been made to this article of the Constitution by a decree published in the Official Gazette of the Federation on 3 February 1983:

"All persons are entitled to health protection. The Law shall define the bases and conditions of access to health services and shall establish the contribution of the Federation and federal agencies with regard to general health."

This article also recognizes that "every person has the right to decide in a free, responsible and informed manner on the number and spacing of children."

Clearly, the right to health as established in the Political Constitution of the Republic coincides with the principle set out in article 12.1 of the Convention.

In December 1983, the Congress of the Union approved the General Law on Health, which came into force six months later. This Law defines the bases and conditions of access to health services by the population.

Various articles of the Law refer to measures relating to women, particularly mother and child care and family planning.

(b) Progress in health and social security programmes

The Government of Mexico has made a sustained effort to make the right of the population to health a reality.

Alongside the Secretariat for Health, which co-ordinates the sector, there are institutions which have helped to expand social assistance and security: the Mexican Social Security Institute, established in 1943; the Institute for Social Security and Services for State Employees, created in 1959; the National Institute for the Protection of Infants, formed in 1958, which became the Mexican Institute for Assistance to Children in 1970 with increased resources; the National System for the Overall Development of the Family, established in 1979.

In this way health coverage, including private medicine for approximately 7 million people, is provided for nearly 60 million inhabitants.

The indicators of the health of the people in Mexico show a radical improvement. In 1930 the life expectancy of the average Mexican was 37 years, whereas it is currently 66 years. Between 1930 and 1986, the annual mortality rate dropped from 25.6 to 5.9 deaths per 1,000 inhabitants. In particular, there has been a substantial decrease in infant mortality. In the last 50 years Mexico has eradicated diseases such as yellow fever, smallpox and typhoid, and other diseases, such as malaria, tuberculosis, hooping cough and measles, are under control.

The 1983-1988 National Development Plan draws attention to the need to focus efforts on enhancing and modernizing the administration of services, encouraging decentralization and strengthening planning, information and control systems.

Along these lines, despite the country's current economic situation, programmes have been designed and developed to ensure the effective and equitable provision of services and to achieve better utilization of installed capacity.

The total population insured by the Mexican Social Security Institute is now 7,332,000 and the number of Mexicans entitled to receive benefits is 28,229,000. On top of this, the Institute has various programmes which cover other important population groups, essentially in the countryside, under the "social solidarity" scheme.

The health sector strategy consists in the integration of care in an effort to achieve adequate institutional co-ordination, locally and regionally, by means of agreements between the health and social security institutions, in order to avoid duplication of functions and to achieve better utilization of resources. In this way, steps are gradually being taken towards the integration of the sector, with the establishment in January 1983 of the Health Office of the Federal Executive.

The health sector policy has been focused on obtaining broader coverage by an expansion of services, stressing preventive activities. The provision of minimum health services is considered to be a priority for the population in rural and urban marginal areas, particularly for the mother and child.

With regard to social security, steps are being taken to guarantee for those entitled to benefits overall protection against risks at work, health care, and the promotion of economic and social benefits and various social welfare activities.

Programmes are being implemented to cover the entire population, as follows: full-scale vaccination campaigns for the population aged under five years; disease detection services; advice to mothers on care during pregnancy; enhanced nutrition for mothers during pregnancy and lactation and direct or indirect care at and after childbirth; extension of family planning services to make them available to all; provision of renabilitation services; extension of essential basic services in marginal zones; increase in school meals for children in basic education and expansion of the population provided with drinking water and sewage disposal services.

The National System for the Overall Development of the Family has focused its efforts on improving nutrition for the mother and child by means of the National Family Feeding Programme, started in 1977, and the Programme of Preventive Medicine and Nutrition.

The Mexican Social Security Institute, the Institute for Social Security and Services for State Employees and the Secretariat of Health, through its Directorate-General for Co-ordinated Public Health Services in the States, are taking a variety of measures to promote nutrition and medical control of malnutrition. The Rural Supplementary Nutrition Programme, applied to pregnant and pre-school women in rural areas, and the Programme of Supplementary Nourishment in Hospitals, designed for needy patients in hospital, are of particular importance.

A step forward in preventive medicine was the establishment in 1979 of the National Vaccination Card System, used to keep a record of the administration of vaccines to control poliomyelitis, measles, diphtheria, whooping cough and tetanus.

In order to satisfy the needs of people who are not fully integrated in the health services, the Social Solidarity Programme was initiated with IMSS-COPLAMAR community participation with a view to improving the standard of living of the most vulnerable groups by means of rural medical care units, semi-urban clinics and modules administered by auxiliary staff supervised by medical personnel. The IMSS-COPLAMAR clinics currently deal with 13 million people.

The Programmes for Expansion of the Drinking Water Supply and Sewage Disposal System are of particular importance because of their direct impact on hygiene and health conditions among the population.

The National Programme of Action for the Integration of Women in Development proposes the following lines of action with regard to health and social security (annex I, pages 42-45):

- Promotion of the evaluation of existing health programmes in relation to medical care for women;

- Implementation of programmes designed to improve the dietary habits of people of all ages;

- Dissemination of campaigns and sundry material designed to prevent cervical, uterine and breast cancer and to increase and ennance preventive services dealing with these types of cancer, as well as oncological rehabilitation services;

- Intensification, through the social communication media, of awareness of tne importance of breast feeding, rather than the use of substitutes for mother's milk;

- Strengthening of the National Health System through the provision of appropriate facilities for preventive medicine, hospital care and specialization, with special emphasis on preventive medicine, wherever the greatest morbidity and mortality are to be found;

- Efforts to ensure that the health sector institutions increase special programmes to prevent perinatal morbidity and mortality;

- Guarantee of appropriate care for women during pregnancy, birth and the period immediately following the birth;

- Implementation of programmes specifically designed for the rural population and the marginal population of the main urban areas, offering the services needed by the women in those population groups;

- Provision of health services to all working women, regardless of their contractual status.

The earthquakes in September 1985 caused considerabe damage to the hospital infrastructure providing second-level and third-level medical care in the capital of tne Republic. To deal with this, the Secretariat of Health formulated a Programme for Health Services Reconstruction and Reorganization, which has made considerable progress to date. As first steps, the damage suffered was appraised, damaged buildings were demolished, services affected were rehabilitated and the operations of severely damaged hospitals were resumed in other clinical units. Efforts are currently being focused on the consolidation of the National Health System.

For a number of years the proportion of federal expenditure devoted to health has fluctuated around 7 per cent, rising in 1985 to 8.2 per cent and in 1986 to 8.6 per cent.

With reference to the specific provisions of article 12.2, it must be said that there are information campaigns and educational programmes for pregnant women to promote awareness of the importance of natural lactation on the health of the mother and child, discouraging the consumption of products to replace mother's milk.

The Secretariat of Health has co-ordinated all the measures promoted by the National Programme for the Integration of Women in Development in relation to health through an internal sectoral commission established for the purpose in 1983 and integrated into the National Commission for Women.

The Commission for Women of the Secretariat of Health is taking steps which reflect the importance of women in the area of health: in the first place, through the specialized health care required by women; in the second place, through their role as the provider of such services in a domestic, community and institutional context. The Commission thus has various functions.

These functions include the following:

I. To promote a quantitative and qualitative improvement in measures designed to enhance the specific health conditions of women, primarily those in the most disadvantaged circumstances;

II. To raise the awareness of women regarding the value of their own health and that of their families;

III. To provide women with information and training to enable them to play a more effective role as educator and auxiliary in health matters;

IV. To promote organized participation by women in community programmes;

V. To encourage the advancement of female personnel and their access to decision-making posts in health institutions;

VI. To draw up the programme of work, define priorities and decide on measures, targets, strategies and the system for evaluation.

The activities carried out by this Commission are based on the priority lines of action established by the National Commission for Women. Since one of the main orientations of the institutional programmes of the national health system is the improvement of the health of women in Mexico, the Commission has directed its efforts to specific areas which require special encouragement because of their particular importance.

Against this background, the Commission has set out to promote the following:

(a) Activities directed towards studying and making known the rates of morbidity and mortality among Mexican women;

(b) Activities designed to prevent cervical, uterine and breast cancer;

(c) Activities designed to enhance care provided during pregnancy, at birth and during the period immediately following birth;

(d) Activities designed to promote and train female personnel working in the Secretariat of Health;

(e) Activities designed to inform and motivate the female population in general and groups of women on the importance of care for their own health, the health of their families and their community, principally with regard to the prevention of cervical, uterine and breast cancer, care during pregnancy, at birth and in the period immediately after birth, and the practice of family planning.

The substantive measures implemented under the auspices of the Commission make a positive contribution to the efforts being made by the Government of Mexico to provide the health services required by the population.

With reference to the statistics regarding the health conditions of women in Mexico, it must be understood that the systematized data available do not provide specific information on certain categories.

Naturally, the primary data gathered on the morbidity and mortality of the population indicate sex and age. However, these aspects get lost during the stages of collection, processing, analysis and dissemination, with the result that, at the end of the process, the output has become generalized and its capacity to express the heterogeneous reality of the different social groups in the country is reduced.

This is why the Directorates-General for Epidemiology and for Information and Statistics of the Secretariat of Health have been focusing efforts on this area in the last three years. This has made it possible to include the sex variable in the system of processing and analysing national health surveys, and there are plans for disseminating the information on care during pregnancy and at birth, with a sex breakdown of the medical consultations conducted in the first-level and second-level units of the Secretariat of Health and elaborating (from July 1987) the routine information on the programmes for the prevention and control of cervical, uterine and breast cancer.

One area of special interest to the internal Commission for Women and Health is the number of deaths among mothers, many of which are thought to be avoidable. There are large gaps in the information on this and work is now being carried out to fill these gaps by a review of death certificates and an examination of classification indicators regarding deaths among mothers, the question of prevalence and efforts aimed at prevention, considering quantitative and qualitative features which affect the coverage provided by services and the demand therefor, including in the latter the impact of the socio-cultural variables prevailing in our society. Other research projects are already in progress and yet more are still on the drawing board, with technical advice and, in part, funding from the Pan American Health Organization.

The lines of action designed to prevent cervical, uterine and breast cancer and improve care during pregnancy, at birth and in the period immediately following birth have been developed mainly by the Directorate-General for Preventive Medicine and the Directorate-General for the Regulation of Health Services, responsible for issuing standards.

It is relevant to mention the valuable and ongoing participation of the Directorate-General for Preventive Medicine in the Commission. Its collaboration in the measures designed to encourage and train the female population of the Secretariat of Health and other groups of women has been substantial, as has the collaboration of the Directorate-General for Health Services in the Federal District, the Directorate-General for Health and Education and the Directorate-General for Family Planning.

The dissemination of information and the promotion of awareness among the female population concerning the importance of valuing and protecting their own health and that of their families and of their community take place in three directions: one aimed at the female public in general, through the mass media, i.e. television, radio and the press; another through events bringing together numerous groups of women; and the third aimed at the women working in the general services of the Secretariat of Health.

The mass media campaigns have included the production of television programmes on the prevention of cervical, uterine and breast cancer, care during pregnancy, at birth and in the period immediately after birth and family planning. There has also been an average of one radio broadcast a week on the various aspects of women's health, such as care during pregnancy, at birth and in the period immediately following birth, cervical, uterine and breast cancer, addictions, acquired immunodeficiency syndrome and sexual violence.

With this in mind, in co-ordination with the National Council for the Integration of Women of the Institutional Revolutionary Party, there are permanent Health Guidance Workshops on the prevention of cervical, uterine and breast cancer, family planning, sexuality and care during pregnancy, at birth and in the period immediately following birth. To date these workshops have been established in 11 health areas of the Federal District and in eight States in Mexico, with the

very useful participation of the Directorate-General for Health Services in the Federal District and the corresponding agencies in the states of the Republic. It is estimated that approximately 3 million women have attended these workshops so far.

Lastly, it is worth mentioning that an investigation was carried out in 1986 into women's organizations in Mexico and their possible involvement in health activities. This investigation formed part of a broader investigation promoted by the World Health Organization in five countries.

Article 14

Status of women in rural areas

In 1975, in connection with the International Women's Year, women were given access to credit through Women's Agricultural-Industrial Units. The necessary requirements for the organization and operation of these Agricultural-Industrial Units were also issued.

The National Programme of Action for the Integration of Women in Development has led to the establishment, and incorporation within it, of an Integrated Programme for the Participation of Rural Women in the Achievement of Rural Development.

In order to fulfil the commitments set out in the Integrated Programme, steps were taken for federal and state monitoring, through the farming offices of the Joint Agrarian Commissions, the follow-up of the measures and their progress and evaluation - i.e. effectiveness of rights, guarantees, preferences and exceptions provided for in the Federal Agrarian Reform Law for women in the rural sector, individually and collectively.

In this process, the Under-Secretariat for Agrarian Organization and Development of the Secretariat for Agrarian Reform has developed specific forms of agrarian organization for the benefit of women, such as the agreement with the National System for the Overall Development of the Family on the joint establishment of offices for legal guidance and advice to women, and the programme to generate jobs for rural women.

The Secretariat for Agrarian Reform's proposals for inter-institutional co-ordination were submitted to the National Commission for Women in February 1986, indicating full implementation of the activities and measures proposed.

The objectives of the Integrated Programme are: to promote the integration of women in Mexico in the towns and in the countryside in economic, political and social activities, and to improve standards of living and social welfare, generating jobs in rural localities with proper remuneration, thus preventing the population drift away from the land.

The first State Inter-institutional Co-ordination Meeting for the Participation of Rural Women in Rural Development took place on 4 August 1987 in co-ordination with the National Council for the Integration of Women in Development of the Institutional Revolutionary Party, the National Peasants' Confederation, the Independent Peasants' Union (Central Campesina Independiente) and other organizations of rural people.

It emerged from this Meeting that the current situation of women in the countryside still requires priority attention in order to achieve realistic and

balanced development. The Meeting also reiterated the undeniable fact that the woman is the focus of the family and that she represents potential productivity, both in the countryside and in the town.

With this in view, the Programme of Action for the Incorporation of Rural Women in the Balanced Development of the Country in Economic, Political and Social Activities has established the following strategy:

- To organize rural women so that they can obtain greater benefit from the efforts, services, support and inputs offered by governmental, social and private institutions;

- To provide the tools required for the constitution and consolidation of women's organizations in the countryside;

- To encourage rural women with organizational experience to spread and promote the formation of women's groups.

Priority has been given to the training of rural women, essentially in order to eradicate illiteracy and also to provide rural women with basic knowledge about the fundamentals of organization, marketing, production, basic accounting, etc. The intention is also to teach subjects that will help bring about improvements in the home in the areas of health, hygiene, nutrition and cultural matters.

The lines of action laid down by the Secretariat for Agrarian Reform are:

- To train rural women;

- To promote economic, social and political development in rural localities in order to create sources of employment;

- To support the family economy;

- To strengthen and popularize the services offered through inter-institutional co-ordination in the agrarian sector for the benefit of rural women.

In 1986, 78 Women's Agricultural-Industrial Units were established, 148 Units were regularized and 63 were consolidated.

The 78 units established were set up in 20 states of the Republic, in the following branches of activity: pigs, poultry, crafts, needlework, weaving, crops, services, market gardening, production of tortillas (maize cakes), fruit, flour-milling and meat.

A Catalogue of Active Units is currently almost complete. To date there are 1,270 units engaged in the following activities: growing of crops (472); poultry (219); production of tortillas and/or milling of flour for tortillas (nixtamal) (173); cattle and livestock (88); clothing industries (61); bee-keeping (44). As a result of this, jobs and income were generated in 1986 for the benefit of approximately 1,850 families.

The Units have been offered legal advice and guidance, specifically with reference to the exercise of their rights through guidance on agricultural procurement and in connection with legal contracts for the marketing and exploitation of resources.

The Agrarian Training Institute has given 94 courses for the Units, assisting 3,883 members, the teaching materials include a special section for rural women.

In order to support the family economies of rural women there has been an attempt to promote activities concerned with the breeding and exploitation of small animals, market gardening, vegetables, domestic workshops, nixtamal milling, tortillas, bakeries and crafts. Guidance has also been provided on supporting the diet through the home consumption of regional products.

Among the examples of inter-institutional co-ordination it is worth mentioning that 80 agreements were reached to assist the Women's Agricultural-Industrial Units in obtaining credit with BANRURAL, and advice has been given to more than 150 units on project viability and product marketing.

List of annexes

I. National Programme of Action for the Integration of Women in Development*

II. Operational Programme of the National Commission for Women for the three-year period 1986-1988*

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* The documents referred to were provided in Spanish by the Government of Mexico to the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Office at Vienna and can be consulted in the offices of the Advancement of Women Branch.